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Preserving and Disseminating the Tribal Languages of Northeast India through Technology

Koj Roshni

Kojroshni8887@gmail.com, Research Scholar, Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar

Abstract-

Knowledge of one's own language gives a sense of pride and belonging to every individual, so it is necessary to have a proper understanding of Indian culture and language. However, it has been observed that there are certain parts of India such as northeast, which has yet to gain exposure of its unique culture in the mainstream, especially regarding history, language, and traditions. Therefore, with the advent of technology it is possible to disseminate on a global platform. Moreover, the new education policy has also initiated for translation of language through technology and all the Indian languages including classical, tribal, and endangered languages will be preserved and promoted to maintain inclusivity as emphasized by NEP 2020. This article aims to preserve and promote indigenous languages from the northeast on a digital platform through AI tools. It discusses language learning apps in which a few well-known northeast languages are included such as Mizo, Khasi, Assamese, Bodo, Meitei, and Garo. The findings from the analysis of the apps indicate that there is a need for AI tools that include all the major northeastern languages to enrich the knowledge on Indian languages. The researcher has also discussed the delimitations of the article and suggested few measures to be taken to preserve and promote the tribal languages. Nevertheless, this study aims to empower the policymakers, tribal community elders, technical experts, and the northeastern linguists to promote inclusivity in disseminating Indian languages on a global platform and contribute to the Indian Knowledge System

through the unexplored languages from the northeast with technology.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Northeast, Language, Artificial Intelligence, NEP 2020

I. INTRODUCTION

Indian knowledge system (IKS) is a mixture of ethos and culture; it is a pride of every Indian citizen because it reflects social integrity and scientific ethos. Every individual is expected to know the value of Indian culture and literature because there is a saying 'loss of culture is loss of identity'. It is so important to have grip knowledge on every part of Indian culture on Arts, crafts, history, and language to become an educated Indian citizen. The Indian knowledge system (IKS) should be preserved for the younger generations and disseminate in a global platform to keep our cultures alive. The New Education Policy 2020 has emphasized for "Knowledge of India" and it will comprise with ancient India till modern India in various fields like education, environment, and health. Moreover, it has mentioned to incorporate tribal knowledge, indigenous languages and practices in learning (NEP 2020,4.27). Language plays a significant role in one's identity as it shapes an individual to stay connected with the culture so, it is important to learn, speak, and preserve the language. Also, NEP 2020 has initiated to preserve all the Indian languages such as endangered languages, classical, and tribal languages to promote inclusivity (22.17).



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It is evident that India is rich in culture, food, and language and it is known for its diversity but only the major Indian tribal languages got exposure in a global platform and the least known tribal languages were left unheard due to lack of oral scripts and digital infrastructure. One such part of the country is the northeast India, there are eight states in the northeast and they are- Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur, and Assam. The people belonging to northeast states are mainly tribal, they have a rich culture, with multiple cuisines, and they practice oral tradition. 90% of the tribes don't have a script, they have been passing down their history and traditions by narrating stories. During the 19th century, the missionaries implemented English medium schools in the northeast region of India and diminished all the tribal languages in the schools, and they translated only religious texts while preparing a written script which eventually marginalized their local languages and many came to an extinct (Chakraborty, 2025). "Languages with no standardized script were dismissed as 'dialects' ignoring their complex oral literature and cultural significance" (Chakraborty, 2025), and eventually many languages became endangered because of less exposure in the national level. There are endless numbers of folklore and folktales from different northeastern states yet they are not included in the NCERT syllabus due to lack of resources like documentation of oral history. The history and tradition of northeast should be included in the curriculum of NCERT books like the other histories of India to maintain inclusivity. Moreover, the Indian knowledge system stands for preserving and promoting all the Indian languages, and the northeastern languages should contribute to the Indian Knowledge system so that every part of India can gain a rich knowledge on Northeast language.

The northeast region of languages is mainly classified into three families such as Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, and Austroasiatic (Chakraborty, 2025), and it has been found that the northeastern tribes has taken initiatives to preserve the endangered languages by implementing various ways. A Miji tribe from Arunachal Pradesh conducts workshops for the youth to teach Miji languages, Moran language from Assam is documenting its grammar and vocabulary by recording, Poumai tribe from Manipur has introduced Poumai subject in all the local schools, Pnar language is putting an effort to formalized its script, Ralte language from Mizoram is preserving their language through songs and narratives, and the Uchai tribe from tripura is preserving their oral traditions through audio recordings (Chakraborty, 2025). However, they are able to preserve and promote their languages only within themselves, they are unable to get the opportunity to represent their language in other parts of India. Therefore, the integration of technology to promote and preserve languages from various parts of India has been emphasized by NEP 2020. "The platform will contain videos, dictionaries, recordings, and more, of people (especially elders) speaking the language, telling stories, reciting poetry, and performing plays, folk songs and dances, and more" (NEP 2020, 22.19). Some of the northeastern states has already initiated few digital platforms such as Assam digital archive, digital Mizoram, and Manipur Cultural website for preserving their culture and Identity (Hazarika, 2024). However, the dominance of English is relevant in almost all the regional platforms, which eventually leads to threatening local languages (Hazarika, 2024). Some of the northeastern languages like Ranglong from Tripura, Singpho from Arunachal Pradesh, and Tai Phakhe from Assam has been considered to be endangered over the last few years (Chakraborty, 2025), and it is very crucial to preserve and protect the endangered languages.



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The integration of digital tools has improved a lot in documenting, disseminating, and revitalizing the endangered languages through language learning apps and online dictionaries (Olaare, 2024). Therefore, the government should take an initiative to preserve northeastern languages through digital platforms.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool is an advanced technology designed for learning languages, translation, content creation, and voice recognition. It has the potential to disseminate the tribal languages of northeast India through translation and transcriptions. Also, the NEP 2020 has emphasized to established Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI) for high quality learning materials in many Indian and foreign languages with proper written and spoken materials. Translation of Sanskrit and other regional languages into English language and other languages to promote all the Indian languages (NEP 2020, 22.14). The use of technology will be mandatory in translating the languages especially AI tools, it will help to translate all the northeastern languages into English language in the initial stage and gradually, it can develop all the languages in AI apps. (Arul Dayanand, 2023) digital tools and AI tools can be an important tool in preserving primary data of the languages such as recording the endangered languages, documenting audio-visual materials, translating the languages, transcriptions, and teaching those languages through educational apps one can preserve the endangered languages.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To preserve northeastern languages through AI technology
- ✓ To contribute northeastern languages to the Indian knowledge system

- ✓ To explain existing apps and digital platform that has northeastern languages

To disseminate northeastern languages in a global platform through technology

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to disseminate the northeastern languages through the digital platforms to ensure inclusivity in contributing to the Indian Knowledge System. It advocates for developing AI tools to preserve and promote the tribal languages by including all the major northeastern languages like other Indian languages. It will benefit the Indian citizens by learning various languages and enriched their knowledge on Indian language.

✓

IV. ANALYSIS

Here is the list of digital tools that supports few northeastern languages:

- **Hello Talk:** It is an AI tool for language learning in many Indian and foreign languages. This app includes many regional Indian languages like kannada, malayalam, Marathi, Bengali etc., it also includes few northeastern languages like Assamese, Bodo, and Meitei (Manipuri). There are many other languages yet to include in this app however, it is a good that few languages are getting its recognition globally.
- **Anuvadini:** It is a human like AI, many Indian languages are available in this app however, Assamese language is the sole language available among the northeastern languages in this app.
- **Bhasha Sangam:** This is an app where an individual can learn various regional Indian languages but only



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few major northeastern languages is available in this app and they are: Assamese, Bodo, Manipuri, and Nepali.

- **Language curry: learn languages:** Assamese is the only language in this app among the other Indian languages, this app is particularly designed only to learn Indian languages, there is no foreign languages like hello talk and duolingo.
- **Bhasini app:** This app aims to promote languages that are minoritized dialects and lesser spoken languages. It is working on including Indian regional languages to bring out the languages in the digital platform for inclusivity of Indian culture and Identity. It has all the 22 scheduled Indian languages for translation into different languages (Krishna, 2025). However, it has very few northeastern languages such as Manipuri, Bodo, and Assamese.
- **Google translate:** It is an AI tool for learning multiple languages, most of the foreign and major Indian languages are available in this app in text and speech form but the few northeastern languages available in this app are Assamese, Mizo, Khasi, and Meiteilon (Manipuri) and it is only available in text form.
- **English to Garo & Garo to English:** It is a Garo English bi directional dictionary for the learners of Garo language.

There are AI tools like *Adi vanni* and *All language translator* that supports tribal languages like Santali, Bhili, Mundari, Gondi, Punjabi, Oriya, Sanskrit, Tamil, Kashmiri etc., but they did not include other tribal languages from the northeast. No doubt that AI tools support most of the major Indian languages but unfortunately, they miss out to include local dialects and

many tribal languages and it becomes less inclusive technology (Krishna, 2025).

There are few language subjects like Khasi, Tendiye, Ao, Assamese, and Manipuri that are relevant and preserving from becoming endangered, however there are many other languages from northeastern states that need to be added in the curriculum as a subject. The three-language formula has been implemented in the schools by New Education Policy but there is a broader need for preserving the northeastern languages for Indian Knowledge System (IKS). Therefore, AI tools should be developed to bring the indigenous languages to the main stream (Jafari, 2023). AI tools can play a pivotal role in preserving the unexplored regional languages of northeast through translation, text to speech, and audio text. It will not only preserve and contribute to the Indian Knowledge system but it will also disseminate the languages in a global platform.

V. CONCLUSION

This study seeks to exhibit the unexplored languages of Northeast India in a digital platform. It discusses about the significance of preserving tribal languages through technology to contribute in Indian Knowledge System. It has also describe about the digital tools for language learning specifically the northeastern languages such as Garo, Assamese, Bodo, Mizo, and Manipuri. The article emphasized to include more northeastern languages on AI apps to ensure inclusivity in preserving Indian languages. It can create regional language content in all the northeastern languages to disseminate the languages globally (Hazarika, 2024). To preserve and promote the tribal languages from northeast, it is expected to develop bilingual digital dictionaries in every northeastern



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languages, document the folklore and folktales in digital text, and translation of every languages into English.

It would help to preserve many endangered languages from the northeast and get recognized in the main stream and the curriculum as well. It is also suggested to attend workshops and seminars on Indigenous languages, Artificial Intelligence tools, and preserving community through languages. This article has been delimited only to learning languages through digital platforms and it did not discussed on learning folktales and oral histories of Northeast India and beyond. However, this study indicates the significance of preserving tribal languages through AI tools because it is important to preserve tribal culture so that the future generations can get access to the traditions rooted with cultural diversity (Das, 2025). It is necessary to promote the tribal languages because it is given very less importance in history and curriculum however, through AI tools it will assure to contribute in Indian knowledge system (IKS) by learning the least explored regional languages.

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